

Westshore Council of Governments (WCOG) meeting, May 13, 2015

by LWV observer Janice Patterson (Westlake/North Olmsted chapter)

This report is not an official statement of the League of Women Voters. Mayor Sutherland's office prepares official minutes, which are posted on Bay Village's website.

Present: Mayors Sutherland (Bay Village), Bobst (Rocky River), Clough (Westlake), Kennedy (North Olmsted), Patton (Fairview Park) and Summers (Lakewood)

Also present: Fiscal Officer Renee Mahoney; Cuyahoga County Director of Regional Collaboration Ed Kraus; Karlton Laster, staff assistant, Department of Regional Collaboration.

Westshore Enforcement Bureau (WEB): March and April financials were received.

RTA: Public Square traffic issues under study; project on target. Completion of new Brookpark station projected for 2016, in time for the Republican National Convention.

NOACA: Deer issues a "hot topic" in some communities. Grant awards to be made in June for Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) program. Rocky River and Fairview Park jointly applied for a planning grant in this program.

Land Bank: Bay Village has one residential property in the process of demolition and Rocky River has received a demolition grant for acreage on Center Ridge Road.

County Planning Commission: A phased housing project in Olmsted Township is under review.

Cuyahoga County Mayors & City Managers Association: Mayors Clough and Bobst reported on sessions they had attended at the recent National League of Cities Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C.

ShareOhio: Cities have received a request to update equipment inventory lists for inclusion in a statewide database. Ramifications of providing such lists were discussed, with several mayors concerned about listing items that can't be shared because of their nearly constant use. It was noted that the state's emergency management office also has specialized equipment available and should be considered for situations such as the type of cleanup needed in northern Ohio after Hurricane Sandy. Again, as in the April WCOG meeting, the mayors stated the need

for a memorandum of understanding before entering the ShareOhio program.

Cuyahoga County Department of Regional Collaboration: Department director Ed Kraus outlined his intentions to support and strengthen the 59 cities' efforts to share. He said that the county now has about 380 contracts with cities for shared services and is ready to broker additional ones. He said that strategic thought is needed about vacant housing issues, that public infrastructure is a highly critical area for attention, and that workforce issues continue to be of concern. The mayors made suggestions for future collaborative efforts, including creation of county-wide special teams such as bomb squads and hazardous materials handling and the provision of training for local planning commissions. The mayors were critical of the recent Business Retention Protocol agreement distributed by the department and urged a rewrite that eliminated the negative "anti-poaching" language.

The next WCOG meeting will be Wednesday, June 10, at 9:30 a.m. in Bay Village City Hall. All meetings are open to the public.